DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 121 169 HE 007 590

TITLE	Guidelines for Conditions of Employment for College and University Presidents.
INSTITUTION	American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Nov 75
NOTE	5p.; This policy statement was adopted by the Annual Meeting of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (15th, Boston, Massachusetts, November, 1975)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS	Administrator Evaluation; Administrator Qualifications; *Administrator Responsibility; Administrator Selection; *Chief Administrators; *Guidelines; *Higher Education; Leadership Qualities; *Organizational Effectiveness

ABSTRACT

There is growing interest throughout the United States in the conditions of employment for college and university presidents: how they are appointed, evaluated, encouraged, and provided with alternative means of exiting from the presidential office. There is need to provide some security for presidential leadership to assure effective administration, opportunities for the assessment of leadership, and dignified means whereby leadership in the person of the campus chief executive may be continued or changed. Considered are: (1) the new phenomenon of systematic evaluation of presidential leadership; and, (2) the need for professional options available to the person leaving the office of the presidency. Guidelines for evaluating the leadership of college and university presidents are presented. (Author/KE)

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ED121169

Guidelines for Conditions of Employment for College and University Presidents

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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HE 007 570

The following policy statement was adopted by the AASCU membership during its 15th Annual Meeting, November, 1975, Boston, Massachusetts.

Introduction

There is growing interest throughout the United States in the conditions of employment for college and university presidents: how they are appointed, evaluated, encouraged, and provided with alternate means of exiting from the presidential office. The campus chief executive is the administrative arm of the campus governing board, and bears enormous responsibility for institutional leadership. The pressure of leadership in critical times inevitably takes its toll. The changing conditions of society (birth rates, social priorities, economic health) present campus leadership with a varying set of challenges and demands. There is required a more carefully described statement of the nature of presidential responsibilities and authority made known at the time of appointment. There is need to provide some security for presidential leadership to assure effective administration, opportunities for the assessment of leadership, and dignified means whereby leadership in the person of the campus chief executive may be continued or changed.

It is urgent that local governing boards discuss with their presidents, and establish in writing, the expectations for leadership for those who hold the position of campus chief executive.* The campus governing boards and the presidents should understand clearly the constraints established by law and governing board policy, while the boards should recognize the campus chief executive's rights as a citizen and responsibilities as an administrator. At the same time, the president or chancellor, as a leading member of the academic profession, should understand and be guided by ethics common to the profession. It is important that the conditions under which college and university presidents serve be known and understood, particularly by the presidents and the governing boards. The institution's constituents also need to know.

In examining the conditions which enhance presidential leadership, it is necessary to consider carefully the new phenomenon of systematic evaluation of presidential leadership; a phenomenon tied closely to expectations of performance. It also is desirable to consider the need for professional options available to the person leaving the office of the presidency.

Employment Conditions

It is assumed that a careful presidential search is made. This presumes that the position responsibilities are described, the expectations of leadership are delineated, the evaluation process is clarified, and the authority of the president is made known. However, experience would indicate that these conditions are not specified to the degree which they should be. The Policies and Purposes Committee of AASCU recommends the following as areas of consideration which should be clarified, and which require a high degree of careful communication.

* Most often called president or chancellor.

1. Contractual Considerations

Few presidents of colleges and universities serve with a clearly stated contractual agreement. Simple letters of understanding seem to be the rule. However, it is time that more formal and precise contracts are developed by campus boards of governors to include at least:

A. Description of the nature and scope of authority and responsibilities vested in the chief campus executive by the governing board.

B. Stipulation of the length of the contract appointment, provisions for renewal of term appointment, limitations of appointment, provisions for notification and due process opportunities prior to the expiration of appointment or during appointment term.

C. Method of acquiring professorship with or without tenure at the time of initial appointment or later, or another administrative appointment.

D. Provision for granting study leaves with a salary which can provide study and travel for the purposes of gaining a new perspective on the institution, renewal of leadership commitments, and stimulation of institutional goals.

E. Delineation of professional benefits and options for leaving the presidency or chancellorship prior to official retirement. Such considerations should include, but are not limited to:

1. Salary adjustment procedures to permit economic readjustment, including all fringe benefits.

2. Assistance available in re-locating residence, including a schedule for vacating institutional-owned presidential residence, if provided, or sale of personal home.

F. Delineation of professional options available at the time of official retirement from the position of chief institutional officer:

1. Designation as President or Chancellor Emeritus.

2. Provision of office space and use of resources, such as library, if desired.

3. All rights and privileges made available to faculty emeriti.

2. Ethical Considerations of College and University Presidents

Governing boards should discuss with their campus chief executive and establish in writing the expectations for the individuals filling the position of president. The president, as a leading member of the academic profession, should be guided by a standard of ethics common to this profession. The governing boards and the chief executives should clearly understand constraints established by law, governing board policy, and recognize the president's basic rights as a citizen.

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities acknowledges the following documents which were helpful:

National Education Association, *Code of Ethics of the Education Profession* (1968, rev. 1972).

American Association of School Administrators, *Code of Ethics* (1966).

State University of New York, *Guidelines for the Review Process for the Chancellor and Presidents,* (1973, rev. 1974).

AASCU is an organization of 320 regional state colleges and universities located in 47 states, the District of Columbia, Guam and the Virgin Islands. Two-thirds of them have graduate programs. They represent the fastest-growing group of four-year institutions in the nation, with a total enrollment of 2 million—25 percent of the total national student population, and 20 percent of those in four-year institutions.

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already known by constituents, and will be instigated, conducted, and concluded by the governing board, only.

It is recommended that the governing boards of colleges and universities establish procedures for a periodic and systematic evaluation of institutional presidential performance which considers the broad span of leadership requirements for the particular institution. All proprieties appropriate to a dignified and professional administrative procedure should be observed, preserving confidentiality throughout. An essential part of any plan for the evaluation of presidential performance may provide:

A. A basic statement of the expectations of presidential leadership, based upon *delineated criteria,* which reflects the governing board's expectations for the presidential performance in the context of the institutional mission.

B. A written self-evaluation of leadership strengths and weakness, successes and failures by the president and in a form acceptable to the president, and/or an objective list of accomplishments attributed to presidential leadership, submitted to the board, or to the evaluator or evaluators, if not the same.

C. A clearly defined statement by the governing board of evaluation procedures.

D. A meeting between the president and the governing board to discuss the evaluation while in progress, or to respond to the results of the evaluation upon completion—and before the general results of the evaluative process are concluded.

4. Opportunity for Personal and Professional Renewal

There should be opportunities for periodic leaves for presidents similar to faculty leaves. Leadership requires exhausting efforts, both physically and intellectually, which mandate individual self-renewal. Planned study and travel leaves should be developed.

The provision for periodic study leaves is to the advantage of the institution, as new perspectives of institutional mission, the renewal of leadership commitments, and the development of new insights are an excellent investment.

Conclusion

These recommendations by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities will assist in attracting and retaining high quality chief executives of colleges and universities. This, of course, enhances the development of these unique academic institutions. A president or chancellor who knows the rights and responsibilities of the office, understands the requirements for ethical relationships, accepts the need for the accountability of leadership through a systematic evaluation, and has available professional support for renewal of leadership requirements will serve with a commitment to the position which assures the quality and mission of the institution.

Ethical Relationships for College and University Presidents

A. The governing board should discuss with the president its expectations of presidential personal and professional leadership and responsibility as chief executive.

B. The president should be expected to relate in an exemplary manner toward all members of constituencies served by the institution.

C. The exercise of presidential leadership should be on a high ethical basis and completely within the constraints established by law and trustee policy.

D. The president should assume responsibility for acquiring, understanding, practicing and extending the body of knowledge required for higher education administration.

E. The president accepts as a primary goal of leadership the provision of appropriate and superior quality educational programs, and an intellectually stimulating campus environment based upon accepted tenets of academic freedom.

F. The president is obligated to carry out to the best of his or her ability the supervisory and administrative mandates of the leadership position.

G. The president accepts as a public trust the responsibilities of educational leadership and stewardship transcending concern for personal, economic, and social rewards.

H. The president assumes leadership in keeping the institution's constituencies fully and honestly informed on matters of public concern.

I. The president shall delegate appropriate and allowable responsibilities for administration with the realization that the president remains ultimately accountable for stewardship.

J. The president's citizenship rights and responsibilities should be exercised in the context of inherent leadership obligations of the position of president.

K. The president shall be granted freedom to serve on private or public boards, councils, or committees unless a clear conflict of interest is present.

L. The president may accept honoraria for appropriate services rendered, unless such services are clearly seen to be within the scope of normal and expected institutional leadership responsibilities.

3. Guidelines for Evaluating the Leadership of College and University Presidents

A presidential review process differs from the initial search for candidates for the presidency. A presidential search is generally extensive, the process of screening and interviewing is complex and long. The major effort at the time of initial recommendation and appointment generally rests with the campus constituents who recommend candidates to the governing board.

The evaluation review process generally will not be as lengthy. It will focus on the performance of a president